

**From:** Amber Pence <APence@cityofboise.org>  
**To:** Chandra Ford <cford@cityofboise.org>  
**Subject:** FW: HB 217 - Urban Renewal House Floor Vote  
**Sent:** Fri, 8 Mar 2019 17:12:42 +0000

FYI

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**From:** Amber Pence  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 7, 2019 4:00 PM  
**Subject:** HB 217 - Urban Renewal House Floor Vote

Hello Boise Legislators,

The City of Boise is opposed to [HB 217](#) and ask for your “no” vote on the House Floor. The City of Boise supports urban renewal districts; one of our only economic development tools. The City of Boise participates in urban renewal districts in a progressive, constructive, innovative, and thoughtful manner.

The City of Boise along with many other invested groups worked collaboratively with the 2015/2016 interim committee to come up with compromises and we are currently abiding by those laws. Idaho cities, nor any of our other table partners were asked or showed HB 217 previous to it being introduced in committee. Although some have perceived this bill to be about “voting”, that is not the case. The ability to go to a vote is already current law, with a voter threshold, that we worked together on just a few year ago.

This bill is also not just about two Boise projects. HB217 will have larger implications for **all** Idaho cities moving forward. The City of Boise is one of the main drivers of economic development and creating thoughtful growth. Many opportunities that involve public-public and private-public-public will be hindered moving forward. For instance if the city wanted to participate in an affordable housing complex that also partnered with mixed uses (apartments on top, coffee shops, etc on first floor) – using only \$1 dollar of urban renewal funds would require a vote. This would be a citywide vote and could potentially pit different parts of a community against another. That is not constructive. This is just one example of a potential effect on a project. As you are aware, the city goes through months, or in some cases years, of public meetings, community conversations, and focus groups when we take on a large project.

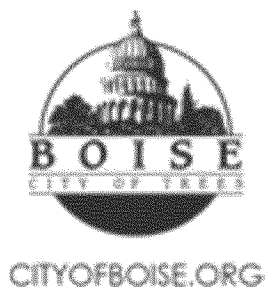
House Bill 217 would cripple economic development efforts by cities around the state.

- Public facilities can have very positive impacts on the local economy (e.g. Caldwell’s Indian Creek Plaza).
- We often hear about government operating at the speed of business, but requiring a public vote in May or November on any finding for urban renewal proper would lock up the gears of municipal government.
- Spending \$1 remodeling or constructing a public facility would require voter approval. In some cases, the cost of the election would be more than the cost of the project.
- Because the bill provides that “Municipal buildings include, but are not limited to...” there will be considerable debate over what buildings are covered by the bill’s provisions.

- The current law was developed with the input and perspective of an Interim Committee that studied these issues in depth.
- Urban renewal and tax increment financing are vital tools for growing Idaho's economy and attracting new businesses and jobs to our state.
- Local governments currently have many opportunities through their budgeting and land use processes to hear citizen input on these projects.

Thank you for your consideration. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Amber Pence



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